Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 1 of page 5 of the replacement specification with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 2 shows ~~an basic business processes involved in an implementation of the present invention is implemented~~ basic business processes involved in an exemplary implementation of the present invention;

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 22 of page 19 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 6 illustrates data exchanges associated with an actual employment or consulting contract being formed. Although Fig. 6 suggests the contract is between hiring agent 401 and supplier agent 402, it should be understood that it is intended that a contract is formed between a candidate employee or contractor and a corresponding employer and the respective agents only represent these parties. An offer message 601 is communicated by one of the parties, typically the hiring agent 401, to human resources server 108. The offer is communicated to the other party, typically supplier agent 402, which can then reject or accept the offer by an accept message 602. Once an offer message 601 and an accept message 602 have been communicated, a contract is formed. Contract message 603 is communicated to both parties, preferably including a contract summary or fully executed viewable/printable version of the engagement contract. In a particular example, human resource server 108 updates profiles within data stores 414 and 416 ~~and 418~~ to indicate the effects of the contract (e.g., the position and candidate are no longer available for matching).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 24 of page 20 with the following amended paragraph:

Optionally, the auto-matched state may be entered manually when a supplier agent 402 or hiring agent 401 "forces" a match by bypassing the match engine processes. This enables a supplier agent 402 to generate a match record for a candidate that was either "inactive" or did not meet the scoring threshold. These candidates profiles still go through the match engine for scoring, but are not subject to the minimum threshold test ordinarily applied to automatches. Another optional feature enables a hiring agent to specify a named resource or candidate on the job requisition which will similarly force a match irrespective of the scoring and thresholds.